

May. 25. 2007 12:48PM

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COBBLESTONE HOMES INC.

No. 3595 P. 1

Sonoma County Winegrape Commission
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United Winegrowers for Sonoma County
P O Box 382
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Sonoma County Farm Bureau
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Santa Rosa, CA 95403

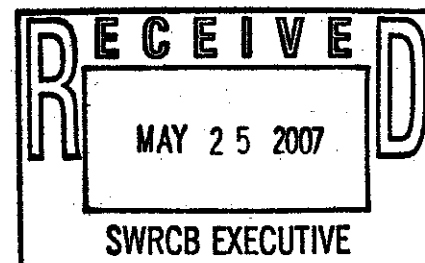
6/19/07 BdMtg Item 9

WR Enforcement

Deadline: 6/6/07 Noon

May 24, 2007

Attention: Song Her, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: June 19, 2007 Water Rights Enforcement Workshop

To the members of the State Water Resources Control Board:

As members of the Sonoma County agricultural community and the Salmonid Coalition we have come together to express our concern regarding the State Water Resource Control Board's emphasis on the new water rights enforcement policy. Potential enforcement action taken against private property owners, who have not intentionally violated state water laws, will reduce the likelihood that landowners will participate in collaborative processes with the goal of supporting or carrying out conservation actions.

Many of our Organization's members are active participants in the Salmonid Coalition. Their involvement is predicated on their desire to work with federal, state and local regulators as well as other impacted communities to develop a cooperative plan that addresses issues of water conservation, best management practices on working agricultural lands, water quality and quantity as well as habitat protection and enhancement for state and federally protected species.

In cooperation with these private property owners, NOAA Fisheries and the RCD are reviewing stream specific environmental data for the mainstem of the Russian River and 16 key tributaries in Alexander, Dry Creek and Knights Valleys. Based upon this review, the Coalition will develop a conservation agreement that will restore and enhance salmonid habitats. Without the cooperation of private property owners these regulatory agencies would not have been able to access most sites that are fundamental to achieve meaningful conservation.

This group has met with success because it has created trusting relationships that promote open communication between agricultural interests, urban water users, industry, private property owners, conservation groups, local government and public agencies. Enforcement actions taken against participating landowners will ensure that these individuals will no longer participate in this collaborative process.

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Additionally, many private property owners identified as violators, may be unaware that they have not complied with State laws. We ask that the limited resources of the State Water Resource Control Board be used not in punishing violators, but by working with violators to bring their projects into compliance with the law while identifying and encouraging additional conservation.

Sincerely,

Nick Frey

Nick Frey
Sonoma County Winegrape Commission

Doug Beretta

Doug Beretta
Sonoma County Farm Bureau

Patrick Campbell

Patrick Campbell
United Winegrowers for Sonoma County

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